Franco and the Kremlin: Comrades in Senescence, P. 2

How Bureaucracy Stifles Free Debate and Free Government

Classification often permits an ambiguity about various commitments. The practice often is to: Maximize commitment in secret discussions with foreign governments; then minimize the risk of commitment in statements made to the American public . . . Americans pride themselves on having an open society, nevertheless, it is becoming an increasingly closed government. Yet neither the Congress nor the people can make intelligent judgments without questions which may literally involve our survival unless they have free access to all pertinent information . . .

—Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad: Report of the Symington subcommittee of Senate Foreign Relations.

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The Price We Pay For Empire

The revelations of the Symington subcommittee report on "Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad" would fall into better focus if it began by saying plainly that the U.S. since World War II has become the biggest empire the world has ever known. The huge military and intelligence establishments required to maintain that empire become increasingly difficult to control. Their size and secrecy make ours a partially closed society. The truth is that no one, not the President or the Secretary of Defense, or even the heads of secret service agencies like CIA, DIA, or NSA, much less the Congress can fully control these monstrous bureaucracies. In their murky depths moves are made which may turn out later to have set the course for disastrous military interventions. We are all trapped by the sheer inertial mass of the machinery required to run the empire. In dozens of ways it frustrates free decision by freely elected government, and there is always the danger that it may, if challenged or given the chance, apply at home the methods it employs abroad. Widespread Army spying on anti-war civilians may be seen as the application at home of the "pacification" techniques the military intelligence apparatus has developed in Vietnam. As in ancient Rome, the price of empire may be the downfall of the Republic.

What We Never Knew Before

"Under the Constitution, the Congress, particularly the Senate," the report begins, "has a responsibility to keep itself fully informed about matters of foreign policy." The 28 pages are packed with examples of how poorly informed—and often deliberately misinformed—the Congress has become. Senate leaders did not learn until the Symington hearings that our bombing operations in Laos began, not with interdiction of the Ho Chi Minh trail, but in support of Royal Lao forces in Northern Laos. The Nixon Administration talks of improving relations with China but raids on the mainland continue from Taiwan, unmanned U.S. reconnaissance planes still fly over China, air bases on Taiwan have been enlarged to handle B-52 bombers and the Nationalist Army, "despite U.S. efforts to make it appear otherwise", still trains (with U.S. supplied equipment) for return to the mainland. Until the Symington hearings, no one knew that the U.S. had conducted joint military exercises with Franco's army to combat a hypothetical uprising. "Creeping commitments" spark new wars in fighting old ones: "After Thai approval of U.S. use of Thai bases for bombing in Laos and Vietnam, insurgent elements surfaced in Thailand. In turn, the U.S. increased its counter-insurgency forces." In Ethiopia, to obtain the use of Kagnew Station (obviously for U-2 flights over the Soviet Union), the U.S. secretly agreed in the 50s to finance a 40,000-man army for Ethiopia. U-2 flights have been replaced by satellites but Kagnew station is still in operation. It is now threatened by Arab-supported Eritrean guerrillas, and the Soviets have reacted by supplying arms to Ethiopia's traditional enemy, Somalia. So cold war engulfs another part of the globe.

Every business man knows the problem of keeping tabs on what goes on in his own business. Imagine trying to ride herd on the biggest business in the world: U.S. military and intelligence operations. Nobody knows the full cost but it probably comes close to $100 billion a year. "As but one illustration of the incredible duplication and waste," the report says, "at one time the three military services, along with AID, USIA and CIA, were each operating independent counter-insurgency programs" in Thailand. The report discloses that no mechanism exists in the executive branch to eliminate duplication between civilian and military snoopers and that even in the Pentagon there is no overall review of competing military intelligence programs—this, despite the establishment by McNamara years ago of a DIA (Defense Intelligence

(Continued on Page Four)

Trouble Ahead For POWs

Q. I wonder if we could go back to the prisoner repatriation issue a moment. In considering the return of Communist prisoners, how much of a problem do you have in getting prisoners who are willing to go back?

A. You mean from the South to the North?

Q. Yes.

A. Well, a lot of them don't want to go back.

Q. To what extent?

A. I'm not sure I could put it in percentage terms, but there is a considerable number of them that, when given the opportunity, do not want to return.

—Secretary of State Rogers to the press Dec. 23.

This colloquy, which went unreported, confirms the warning in our Dec. 28 issue (which went to press Dec. 17) that the "voluntary repatriation" issue which delayed the Korean truce by 18 months (and 140,000 casualties) may reappear in the Vietnam peace talks. Rogers' replies reveal that some kind of poll, and perhaps the same kind of POW "re-education" program as in Korea, have taken place behind the scenes. Why is the press, in the midst of all the uproar about hastening a POW exchange, failing to cover a development which may delay an exchange by many months?

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THE COMMUTATION OF THE DEATH SENTENCES in the Leningrad and Burgos trials have similar backgrounds. Both reflect the desperation of suppressed national minorities: in the one case of Russian Jews, in the other of Spanish Basques. Both occurred in slowly decaying dictatorships, one Communist, the other Fascist. Both will be followed by new trials, in Russia of more Jews accused of Zionism, i.e., of national deviations; in Spain, not only of Catalans as well as Basques but of other Spaniards accused of "subversion." Rebellious Basque and Catalan separatists have become focal points for general animosity to the senescent Franco regime. Kremlin fears of similar repercussions in the Soviet Union may explain why no national publicity was given the Leningrad trial until after it was over. Perhaps the Soviet bureaucracy feared other rebellious minorities or Great Russian dissidents would be sympathetic to the Jews and might try hi-jackings of their own to get out. For Russia is again what it was under the Czars "a prison-house of nations." If the Kremlin should ever allow free emigration to Jews, half the population would convert to Judaism.

U.S. Paratroopers for Franco

IN BOTH COUNTRIES THE GOVERNMENT'S GRIP is weakening. In Spain, two leading papers *Ya* and *ABC* asked clemency for the men who murdered the sadistic police chief in Burgos. In the Soviet Union, though the press remains suffocatingly "unanimous," actions took place which would have been unthinkable in the Stalin era: The physicist Sakharov showed his solidarity with the accused by attending the trial, sympathizers demonstrated outside and foreign correspondents were given summaries of the statements made in court by the defendants; these boldly defended Jewish nationalist aspirations bred by discrimination and the regime's covert dabbling in anti-Semitism. One effect of the Leningrad trials was to deepen the widening rift between the West European Communist parties and the Kremlin. A disturbing aspect of the Spanish trial is that the U.S. seems to have been the only NATO government not to intercede with Madrid. The newly released Symington committee report on U.S. commitments abroad reveals (pps. 11 & 22) that in 1967-69 U.S. Army paratroopers were flown from Germany and dropped in Spain as part of joint unconventional warfare exercises with the Spanish army to put down a hypothetical uprising in north central Spain not far from the Basque provinces. Such a rising begins to seem less and less hypothetical.

THE MAIN TARGETS OF THE WORKERS REVOLT in the Baltic cities of Poland, as in the Hungarian and Polish risings 14 years ago, were the hated secret police, the party headquarters, and the "company union" style trade unionists. The Communist bureaucracy is seen by the working class as its No. 1 enemy. The "Marxist-Leninists" remain blind to this ironic dialectic in the workers' paradise. To recognize it would require them to relinquish their special privileges and power. The blindness extends even to China which is supposed to have undergone an antibureaucratic shakeup in the Cultural Revolution and is the only Communist state to support the Polish rebels. Unfortunately there is no breath of reality in the Maoist gibberish with which the *Peking Review* (Dec. 25) attributes the uprising to anger against "revisionism" and "restoration of capitalism." One of the main demands of the Szcecin workers (as of Budapest's in 1956) was freedom of the press. Jeffersonianism is again a revolutionary creed. Gomulka promised more candor when he took power 14 years ago as Gierek does now. But Gomulka ended by crushing Poland's promising experiment in a freer press. There is less reason to believe Gierek's promises since the hard-line and anti-Semitic secret police chief Mosczar has risen to greater power in the wake of Gomulka's removal. Stanley Karnow,

Only Following Civilian Example

There has been much blaming of the Army for all of this, but we must recognize that the responsibility lies not with the Army, but with all of us. Those of us who have supported legislation designed to limit legitimate constitutional rights, who voted for the so-called Riot Act and all the rest, helped create the climate of fear that resulted in the Army's decision to create its domestic spy network, a network that eventually cast its eyes of doubt on men whom we know to be loyal and patriotic. That climate of fear had the majority of Congress saying that we should imprison people who crossed State lines with the intent of creating a civil disturbance. Enforcement of such a law requires knowing what is in a traveler's mind. What was the Army to do, but follow the lead of Congress? It is little wonder that some charged with protecting against civil disorder read their mandate broadly, broadly enough to have them set up a network designed to find out what was in the minds of people whom the Army felt might cause trouble—people whom the majority of Congress said should be in jail—oddballs, loud dissenters, unconventional people. Those who seek to read the political minds of legitimate dissenters must expect the mind readers to read any mind they please.

—Gonzales (D. Tex) *in the House Dec. 19 (abr).*

Must The Greek People Give Up Their Freedom To Serve U.S. Security?

It was good of you to reply, on behalf of President Nixon, to the open letter we addressed to him, expressing our concern and protest on the decision to resume the shipment of heavy arms to Greece.

Your letter, dated November 10, reaffirms an earlier State Department spokesman's statement about the "trend toward a constitutional order is established" in Greece, and reiterates the "firm commitment" of one United States to a policy which is concerned with "steady progress toward restoring Greece to political Government." That was only just over three weeks ago. Today we learn about the new wave of arrests in Greece, where the predawn knock on the door came for some 30 to 40 unsuspecting citizens; about the new cases of torture; about the sham election of the so-called "consultative body", virtually the regime's own nominees. The harsh press law is now extended to foreign correspondents inside Greece, and even to journalists writing abroad about Greece.

All this, however, is apparently irrelevant to your Government's decision to resume full arms deliveries and to render support and encouragement to the Athens regime.

For, with total inconsistency, you also tell us that: "The decision to resume the shipment of the suspended items to Greece was based *entirely* on considerations which concern the security of the United States." We confess that, when we read this passage of your letter, we were taken aback.

And we know that large numbers of Greek people having read your letter in the Greek press (although they were not given the opportunity to read ours), saw it as an astonishing display of official cynicism.

Can it really be true, as we must conclude from your letter, that Greece was chosen, alone among the countries of Europe, to forfeit its vital freedoms in order to preserve the security of the United States?

—25 Leading Greek Journalists in Exile to Deputy Asst Secretary of State Davies in Con. Rec. *Dec. 17 S20409.*

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who was in Poland a few months ago, writes (*Wash. Post* Dec. 28) that a Warsaw editor told him, "The system isn't working because nobody believes in it and nobody believes in it because it isn't working." Without freedom of the press, the rulers nowhere in the Soviet world know what the people are really thinking, and people have no confidence in their rulers because they have no way of knowing what their rulers are really doing.

The Pentagon's Biggest Scandal

THE TFX WAS THE LARGEST SINGLE defense contract of the Kennedy-Johnson-McNamara years, and the most expensive blunder. Thanks to a split within the military-industrial complex between General Dynamics, which won the contract, and Boeing, the low bidder (which lost) the deal was thoroughly investigated by the Senate's McClellan committee. The Kennedy assassination cut the inquiry short just at the point where the trail of politics and corporate influence led straight into the White House. When the committee resumed the inquiry three years later, the Johnson administration shut off access to the records. These were not made available until Nixon took office, and the Committee has finally made its report. Two sacred cows of the liberal establishment, Robert S. McNamara and Roswell Gilpatric, come out very badly in it. Muskie did his best to protect them during the earlier inquiry and Javits declined to sign the report (though three other liberals on the committee—Ribicoff, Metcalf and Percy—did so.)

The two leading papers of the liberal establishment press, the *Washington Post* (Dec. 29) and the *New York Times* (Jan. 2) in their editorial comments did their best to disparage the report. Gilpatric is a director of the *Washington Post* but it did fully report the findings criticizing him. He was condemned in the report for a "flagrant conflict of interest." He was counsel for General Dynamics before becoming Under Secretary of Defense and returned to the same law firm after leaving the Pentagon. Javits claimed Gilpatric played only a "minor role" in the contract award. The record does not bear him out. The multi-billion dollar contract saved General Dynamics when it was on the verge of receivership and kept its Fort Worth, Texas, Convair plant from a shutdown. The final report, though it exposes McNamara's conceit and deceit, and shows Gilpatric's efforts to hide his close relationship with General Dynamics, does not go far enough. It casts a veil over the politics of the contract and is less than forthright in dealing with General Dynamics itself. This holding company seems to play no role other than as a conduit for political influence; some of its manufacturing subsidiaries have a good, some like Convair a bad, record. For a fuller story, fully supported by the report as far as it goes, see my two-part analysis in the *New York Review* Jan. 2, 1969. The main analysis may be found in my *Polemics and Prophecies* to be published Feb. 1 by Random House.

GRIM ITEM FOR A CERTAIN FOOTBALL FAN IN THE WHITE HOUSE: "Even the captain of the Army football team," said a survey of the new spirit sweeping college athletes on the sports page of the *New York Times* Dec. 13, "shocked West Point and the Pentagon by revealing that 'if you polled the football team and asked everybody about Vietnam, I think the feeling would be overwhelmingly in favor of getting out.' "

Two Silver Star Heroes Score Son Tay

Two new members of the Georgia General Assembly questioned the wisdom of raiding prison camps in North Vietnam to free American servicemen after Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Capen told a group of POW families here that the Defense department has not ruled out more raids similar to the Nov. 21 raid against Son Tay. DeKalb Senator-elect Max Cleland, a former Army Captain who lost both legs and an arm in Vietnam, and DeKalb Representative-elect Walter D. Russell, a former lieutenant colonel and nephew of Georgia Sen. Richard B. Russell took issue with Capen. Cleland and Russell, both Silver Star winners, said they believe a negotiated withdrawal of U.S. land forces from Vietnam in return for a cease-fire and a swapping of war prisoners is "the best path our country could follow at this time." They said they will introduce a resolution when the legislature convenes next month. AF Maj Fred Thompson, one of the nine released POWs, agreed with Cleland and Russell.

—Atlanta Constitution, *Dec. 19 (abridged).*

Like A Story Out of Dreiser: American Capitalism In Its Dirtiest Underwear

This is a case study of corporate disaster stemming from the almost unbelievable history of one of the Penn Central's important non-railroad related subsidiaries—Executive Jet Aviation (EJA)—and how Penn Central lost almost all of its $21 million investment. The large non-railroad investments were a major factor in the collapse of the Penn Central. The study raises most serious questions about the commercial banking industry (which) made massive amounts of credit available to EJA for what appeared to be highly questionable—if not at times illegal—activities. The staff data suggests strongly that the loan decisions were made exclusively because the banks and EJA had mutual friends at Penn Central.

There was an astonishing lack of fiduciary concern. The decisions were made almost exclusively by David Bevan, chairman of the Pennsylvania RR and Finance Committee and his protege, Wm. Gerstnecker, PRR Treasurer. They did not request Board approval for the EJA investment. The investment was initiated with full realization that a railroad's control of an air carrier without CAB approval was in direct violation of the law. Some $6 million in unsecured PRR investments were made in EJA after the CAB order to the railroad to divest itself.

The disastrous PRR nonrailroad investment program was mapped to a large extent by Chas. J. Hodge, a senior member of the investment firm of F. I. du Pont-Glore Forgan. EJA entered into a series of secret, illegal and extraordinarily complex transactions. Four million dollars—part of $10 million in European bank loans to the PRR to finance the reconditioning of railroad cars—was seized from a Liechtenstein trust by one of the men involved in EJA's program. Bevan did not disclose the loss to the chairman of the PRR Board until 9 months after.

Bevan was aware of repeated recommendations in 1967 for removal of O. F. Lassiter [Brig. Gen. USAF ret.] chief executive of EJA. Hodge himself made such a recommendation in 1968. Nor did Bevan seek Lassiter's removal even after the discovery that Lassiter had transferred EJA funds to his own company, Lassiter Aircraft. Bevan and Hodge were both aware that Lassiter had squandered millions of dollars of EJA assets. In 1968 J. H. Ricciardi, a former EJA employee, filed suit to recover salary and expenses. (He) testified under oath that at Lassiter's request he had provided female companions for Bevan and Hodge to relieve the pressure they were exerting on Lassiter. The suit was settled out of court in 1969 on payment of $13,000. Lassiter, Bevan and Hodge have denied the allegations. Where the money came from remains unanswered.

—Abridged from Chairman Patman's letter transmitting to the House Banking and Currency Committee Dec. 21 Part II of a staff study into the Penn Central failure, the biggest bankruptcy in U.S. history.

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Secrecy Makes It Hard To Nip New Missile Crises In The Bud

(Continued from Page One)

Agency) supposed to coordinate all Pentagon gumshoe work. The total cost of military intelligence in 1970, the report reveals, was $2.9 billion, no bagatelle even in the Pentagon.

The secret services are big enough to run their own secret wars. "Everyone recognizes," the report says, "that national security imposes limits on the disclosure of information. But the multimillion dollar support of a 30,000 man army can in no way be considered an intelligence operation." The reference is to the CIA in Laos. There may be some benefits in secrecy. Considering the monumental misjudgments of U.S. intelligence in the past two decades in Korea, in Cuba, and in Vietnam, it's just as well that intelligence reports are confined to a select circle. The Symington report has a lovely quotation from Walter Lippmann. He once wrote of the information funnelled into our policy makers that the men reporting to them realize "that it is safer to be wrong before it has become fashionable to be right." Every bureaucracy likes its intelligence apparatus to confirm its preconceptions. But couldn't this reassuring yesmanship be done more cheaply?

A David-and-Goliath Achievement

The passion for secrecy, and its use to hide misjudgments from those who must ultimately foot the bill in lives and money, was the main obstacle in this two-year investigation. If ever there was a David-and-Goliath operation, this was it. A newspaperman, Walter Pincus, and a lawyer, Roland A. Paul, were the two-man staff of this special subcommittee of Senate Foreign Relations under Senator Symington. Their job was to survey commitments to more than 43 nations represented by 375 major, and 3,000 minor, U.S. bases abroad. They visited 23 countries and held 37 days of hearings. The published record fills over 2,500 heavily censored but nevertheless revealing pages. The hearings were made possible by Symington's conversion in recent years from a pillar of the military establishment to one of its severest critics. The report deserves wider reading and closer study than it is likely to get.

The subcommittee's greatest difficulty was in dealing with the subject of nuclear weapons. We seem to have scattered these all around the globe. Some day rebels against governments we support may "kidnap" and use some of them for a kind of blackmail. A leak during the hearings disclosed that our military feared something like this in Greece. The danger to these sacred monsters we have planted around the globe may yet serve as additional rationale for helping a Chiang, a Papadapolous or a Franco to put down a rebellion against the lack of freedom in so many corners of our "free world." At one point "the Executive Branch claimed that this subject is of such high classification that it could not be discussed before this Foreign Relations subcommittee under any circumstances." Subsequently it relented and agreed to a single-day world-wide briefing of the full Senate Foreign Relations committee but only on condition that there be but one transcript, and this to be held by the State Department! This is a long way from the Constitution, which begins to seem a quaint relic.

The bureaucracy, with its gift for reassuring euphemism, sold the country long ago on "containment." It sounded neat and sanitary. No one ever put the question, "Shall we sow instant death around the borders of the Soviet bloc and China by ringing them with nuclear devices and delivery systems?" This is what has been going on since the 50s. The report reminds us that the U.S. went to the brink of nuclear war in 1962 "when faced with the possibility that the Soviet Union was putting missiles in a country 90 miles from the U.S." We must assume that "the Soviets, as they view our placement of tactical nuclear weapons in countries far closer to their borders than Cuba is to ours, will seek to break out of the nuclear ring that has been drawn around them." New missile crises may not be resolved as peacefully as in 1962. How can Congress and the country take preventive measures when censorship blacks out so much of what we need to know? The full price of empire has yet to fall due.

What The Back-To-Bombing Advisers Forget

President Nixon has decided to use the threat of escalation in the air to prevent the enemy from building up its capacity to launch offensives in South Vietnam. . . . It may sound impressive to speak of bombing Hanoi, mining Haiphong harbor and destroying the rail lines to China. Yet it is worth recalling that during the entire course of the French Indochina war, the French actually controlled Hanoi, Haiphong harbor, and the China rail lines—and still the enemy was able to conduct a successful guerrilla war throughout Indochina. It is hard to conceive how bombing of these targets will succeed where French control of them failed.

—From Goodell's last speech in the Senate Dec. 22.

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